

HEWLETT-PACKARD COMPANY
Intellectual Property Administration
P.O. Box 272400
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PATENT APPLICATION

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. 200312030-1

IN THE
UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventor(s): Keith Istvan FARKAS et al.

Confirmation No.: 8159

Application No.: 10/614,856

Examiner: Faris S. ALMATRAHI

Filing Date: July 9, 2003

Group Art Unit: 3627

Title: INVENTORY MANAGEMENT OF COMPONENTS

Mail Stop Appeal Brief-Patents
Commissioner For Patents
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

TRANSMITTAL OF APPEAL BRIEF

Transmitted herewith is the Appeal Brief in this application with respect to the Notice of Appeal filed on December 23, 2008.

☒ The fee for filing this Appeal Brief is \$540.00 (37 CFR 41.20).

☐ No Additional Fee Required.

(complete (a) or (b) as applicable)

The proceedings herein are for a patent application and the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a) apply.

☐ (a) Applicant petitions for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136 (fees: 37 CFR 1.17(a)-(d)) for the total number of months checked below:

☐ 1st Month
\$130

☐ 2nd Month
\$490

☐ 3rd Month
\$1110

☐ 4th Month
\$1730

☐ The extension fee has already been filed in this application.

☒ (b) Applicant believes that no extension of time is required. However, this conditional petition is being made to provide for the possibility that applicant has inadvertently overlooked the need for a petition and fee for extension of time.

Please charge to Deposit Account 08-2025 the sum of \$ 540 . At any time during the pendency of this application, please charge any fees required or credit any over payment to Deposit Account 08-2025 pursuant to 37 CFR 1.25. Additionally please charge any fees to Deposit Account 08-2025 under 37 CFR 1.16 through 1.21 inclusive, and any other sections in Title 37 of the Code of Federal Regulations that may regulate fees.

Respectfully submitted,

Keith Istvan FARKAS et al.

By 

Timothy B. Kang

Attorney/Agent for Applicant(s)

Reg No. : 46,423

Date : February 23, 2009

Telephone : (703) 652-3817

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MAIL STOP APPEAL BRIEF - PATENTS

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APPEAL BRIEF - PATENTS

Sir:

This is an Appeal Brief in connection with the decision of the Examiner in a Final Office Action dated September 23, 2008. This Appeal Brief is hereby submitted within 2 months of the filing of the Notice of Appeal, which was filed on December 23, 2008.

Each of the topics required in an Appeal Brief and a Table of Contents are presented herewith and labeled appropriately.

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(1) Real Party In Interest

The real party in interest is Hewlett-Packard Development Company, L.P.

(2) Related Appeals And Interferences

There are no other appeals or interferences related to this case.

(3) Status Of Claims

Claims 13-36 have been canceled.

Claims 43-54 have not been withdrawn from further consideration on the improper basis that these claims are directed to a nonelected invention.

Claims 1-12 and 37-54 are thus pending in the present application.

Claims 1-12 and 37-42 stand rejected.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 41.37, the Appellants hereby appeal the Examiner's decision finally rejecting all of the pending claims to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences. Therefore, Claims 1-12 and 37-54 of this application are at issue on this appeal.

(4) Status of Amendments

No amendment was filed subsequent to the final Office Action dated September 23, 2008.

A copy of the claims at issue on appeal is attached as the Claims Appendix.

(5) Summary Of Claimed Subject Matter

Claims 1, 43, and 49 are the independent claims at issue in this appeal. Depending Claim 41 is argued separately and is thus presented herein.

Independent Claim 1

Independent Claim 1 pertains to a system for managing inventory of components 118 in a room 100. The system includes:

a plurality of identification devices 120 affixed to respective associated components 118, said plurality of identification devices 120 being configured to communicate identification information relating to the respective associated components 118 and comprising respective digital displays (*Specification*, page 12, lines 10 and 11) configured to display the identification information (*Specification*, page 8, lines 1-5);

a reader device 134a-134c, 304 configured to substantially autonomously receive the identification information from the identification devices 120 (*Specification*, page 9, lines 14-27);

means for identifying locations 214 of the identification devices 120 from the identification information received by the reader device 134a-134c, 302 from the plurality of identification devices 120 (location information 214 is captured by an identification device 120 and interpreted to determine the location of the identification device, *Specification*, page 13, line 6-page 14, line 7, and page 25, lines 3-8); and

a controller 312 configured to communicate with the reader device 134a-134c, 302 and compile the identification information 214 received from the reader device 134a-134c, 302 and to communicate with the means for identifying the locations of the identification

devices 120 to maintain an inventory of the components 118 and their respective locations (*Specification*, page 26, lines 10-15).

Depending Claim 41

Depending Claim 41 pertains to a system that depends upon allowable Claim 1. Claim 41 recites that the reader device 134a-134c, 304 comprises an imaging device 134a-134c, 304 positioned on one of a ceiling and a wall of the room 100, wherein the imaging device 134a-134c, 304 is configured to obtain images of the plurality of identification devices 120, and wherein the means for identifying 214 is further configured to read the identification information from the images of the plurality of the identification devices 120. *Specification*, page 13, lines 6-13.

Independent Claim 43

Independent Claim 43 pertains to a system for managing inventory of components 118 in a room 100. The system includes:

a plurality of identification devices 120 affixed to respective associated components 118, said plurality of identification devices 120 being configured to communicate identification information relating to the respective associated components 118 (*Specification*, page 8, lines 1-5);

an imaging device 134a-134c, 304 positioned on one of a ceiling and a wall of the room 100, wherein the imaging device 134a-134c, 304 is configured to obtain images of the plurality of identification devices 120 in a substantially autonomous manner to receive the identification information from the identification devices 120;

means for identifying locations 214 of the identification devices 120 from reading the identification information contained in the images obtained by the imaging device 134a-134c, 304 (location information 214 is captured by an identification device 120 and interpreted to determine the location of the identification device, *Specification*, page 13, line 6-page 14, line 7, and page 25, lines 3-8); and

a controller 312 configured to communicate with the imaging device 134a-134c, 304 and compile the identification information 214 received from the reader device 134a-134c, 304 and to communicate with the means for identifying the locations of the identification devices 120 to maintain an inventory of the components 118 and their respective locations (*Specification*, page 26, lines 10-15).

Independent Claim 49

Independent Claim 49 pertains to a system for managing inventory of components 118 in a room 100. The system includes:

a plurality of identification devices 120 affixed to respective associated components 118, said plurality of identification devices 120 visually displaying location information pertaining to locations of the respective associated components 118 (*Specification*, page 8, lines 1-5);

a reader device 134a-134c, 304 configured to substantially autonomously receive the location information from the identification devices 120 through imaging of the visually displayed location information 214;

means for identifying locations 214 of the identification devices 120 from the location information received by the reader device 134a-134c, 304 (location information 214 is

captured by an identification device 120 and interpreted to determine the location of the identification device, *Specification*, page 13, line 6-page 14, line 7, and page 25, lines 3-8); and

a controller 312 configured to communicate with the reader device 134a-134c, 304 and compile the identification information received from the reader device 134a-134c, 304 and to communicate with the means for identifying the locations of the identification devices 120 to maintain an inventory of the components and their respective locations (*Specification*, page 26, lines 10-15).

(6) Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

Whether Claims 43-54 should have been withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a nonelected invention.

Whether Claims 41-42 should have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Whether Claims 1-10 and 37-40 should have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,546,315 to Kleinschnitz in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0020935 to Gelbman.

Whether Claims 11 and 12 should have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,546,315 to Kleinschnitz in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0020935 to Gelbman further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,434,775 to Sims et al. (herein after "Sims").

Whether Claims 41 and 42 should have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,546,315 to Kleinschnitz in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0020935 to Gelbman further in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0106937 to Creager et al. (herein after “Creager”).

(7) Arguments

A. Discussion of the Law

1. Claims for Different Invention Added After an Office Action

“If, after an office action on an application, the applicant presents claims directed to an invention distinct from and independent of the invention previously claimed, the applicant will be required to restrict the claims to the invention previously claimed if the amendment is entered, subject to reconsideration and review as provided in §§1.143 and 1.144.” MPEP §821.03.

2. 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

“The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.” 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph.

“Alternative expressions are permitted if they present no uncertainty or ambiguity with respect to the question of scope or clarity of the claims.” MPEP 2173.05(h).

3. Test for Obviousness

The test for determining if a claim is rendered obvious by one or more references for purposes of a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is set forth in *KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc.*, 550 U.S. ___, 82 USPQ2d 1385 (2007):

“Under §103, the scope and content of the prior art are to be determined; differences between the prior art and the claims at issue are to be ascertained; and the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art resolved. Against this background the obviousness or nonobviousness of the subject matter is determined. Such secondary considerations as commercial success, long felt but unsolved needs, failure of others, etc., might be utilized to give light to the circumstances surrounding the origin of the subject matter sought to be patented.” Quoting *Graham v. John Deere Co. of Kansas City*, 383 U.S. 1 (1966).

As set forth in MPEP 2143.03, to ascertain the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue, “[a]ll claim limitations must be considered” because “all words in a claim must be considered in judging the patentability of that claim against the prior art.” *In re Wilson*, 424 F.2d 1382, 1385. According to the Examination Guidelines for Determining Obviousness Under 35 U.S.C. 103 in view of *KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc.*, Federal Register, Vol. 72, No. 195, 57526, 57529 (October 10, 2007), once the *Graham* factual inquiries are resolved, there must be a determination of whether the claimed invention would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art based on any one of the following proper rationales:

(A) Combining prior art elements according to known methods to yield predictable results; (B) Simple substitution of one known element for another to obtain predictable results; (C) Use of known technique to improve similar devices (methods, or products) in the same way; (D) Applying a known technique to a known device (method, or product) ready for improvement to yield predictable results; (E) “Obvious to try”—choosing from a finite number of identified, predictable solutions, with a reasonable expectation of success; (F) Known work in one field of endeavor may prompt variations of it for use in either the same field or a different one based on design incentives or other market forces if the variations would have been predictable to one of ordinary skill in the art; (G) Some teaching, suggestion, or motivation in the prior art that would have led one of ordinary skill to modify the prior art reference or to combine prior art reference teachings to arrive at the claimed invention. *KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc.*, 550 U.S. ___, 82 USPQ2d 1385 (2007).

Furthermore, as set forth in *KSR International Co. v. Teleflex Inc.*, quoting from *In re Kahn*, 441 F.3d 977, 988 (CA Fed. 2006), “[R]ejections on obviousness grounds cannot be sustained by mere conclusory statements; instead, there must be some articulated reasonings with some rational underpinning to support the legal conclusion of obviousness.”

Therefore, if the above-identified criteria and rationales are not met, then the cited reference(s) fails to render obvious the claimed invention and, thus, the claimed invention is distinguishable over the cited reference(s).

B. The Appellant’s Position

1. The Examiner Erred in Withdrawing Claims 43-54 from Consideration

The Examiner asserts that Claims 43-54 are directed to “an imaging reader device configured to obtain visual images of the identification devices.” Although not explicitly discussed, the Examiner appears to conclude that the asserted “imaging reader device” is independent or distinct from the reader device claimed in originally elected and examined independent Claim 1 and the claims that depend therefrom. For the record, the Examiner has presented no justification for this conclusion. In fact, there appears to be no reasonable justification for the assertion that Claims 43-54 are independent or distinct from Claims 1-12 and 37-42 because the elements claimed in these sets of claims are common to each other. In other words, Claims 43-54 do not contain additional features to those claimed in Claims 1-12 and 37-42.

For instance, the “imaging reader device” was originally claimed in depending Claim 8 and in Claim 41, which were both examined by the Examiner. As such, the Examiner has already searched for and considered most, if not all, of the elements claimed in Claims 43-54. Accordingly, it is clear that Claims 43-54 are not directed to an invention distinct from and independent of the invention previously claimed, but, Claims 43-54 are directed to an invention that has a slightly different scope in comparison to Claims 1-12 and 37-42. In addition, even if Claims 43-54 could somehow be construed as being independent or distinct from Claims 1-12 and 37-42, there is so serious burden on the Examiner to examine these claims because the Examiner has already considered all of the features claimed in those claims.

Accordingly, the Examiner improperly relied upon the provisions of MPEP §821.03 to withdraw Claims 43-54 from consideration.

In addition, Claims 43-54 are allowable over the cited documents of record for at least the reasons presented herein below with respect to Claims 1-12 and 37-42.

2. The Examiner Erred in Rejecting Claims 41 and 42 Under 35

U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

The Examiner asserts that “wherein the reader device comprises an imaging device positioned on one of a ceiling and a wall of the room” is being vague and indefinite. This rejection is clearly erroneous because there is no doubt as to how this language is to be construed. The Examiner states “[i]t is unclear if the applicant is implying that the imaging device is positioned on a ceiling or a wall of the room.” It thus appears that the Examiner’s confusion lies in that the ceiling and the wall have been expressed as alternative expressions.

As stated in MPEP 2173.05(h), however, “[a]lternative expressions are permitted if they present no uncertainty or ambiguity with respect to the question of scope or clarity of the claims.”

In the instant case, Claim 41 recites that the reader device is positioned on one of a ceiling and a wall of the room. There is nothing ambiguous about this claimed feature because this claim states that the reader device is positioned either on the ceiling or a wall of the room. There is no other reasonable interpretation that could be taken here and thus, there is no ambiguity nor is there any uncertainty in the claim terms.

According, the Examiner improperly rejected Claims 41 and 42 as being indefinite.

3. The Rejection of Claims 1-10 and 37-40 is Improper

The Examiner asserts that Kleinshnitz discloses all of the features claimed in independent Claim 1, except for digital displays on respective media cartridges. As will become clearer from the following discussion, Kleinshnitz fails to disclose other features of independent Claim 1.

Kleinshnitz discloses a storage library 100 that utilizes a robot gripper hand 207 to selectively identify and grab media cartridges 305. The media cartridges 305 are disclosed as including bar code labels that uniquely identify each of the media cartridges 305.

Kleinshnitz, column 7, lines 44-46. In this regard, a bar code scanner 307 is attached to the robot gripper hand 207, which is movable in multiple axes, to read the bar code labels on variously positioned media cartridges 305. *Kleinshnitz*, column 7, lines 47-60.

Kleinshnitz also discloses that a bar code reader 404 is used with the bar code scanner 207 to create and verify an inventory of the media cartridges 305. Column 8, lines 12-30.

Kleinshnitz determines and stores the locations of the media cartridges 305 based upon which of a plurality of cartridge access magazines (CAMs) 202 that the media cartridges 305 are housed. Column 23, lines 23-25. In other words, Kleinshnitz discloses that the media cartridges 305 are inventoried according to their respective locations in the CAMS 202. Thus, for instance, Kleinshnitz discloses that the locations of new media cartridges 305 are tracked as they are inserted into the CAMs 202. Column 8, lines 12-17.

As such, Kleinshnitz fails to disclose that the locations of the labels on the media cartridges 305 are identified based upon the identification information contained on the labels as claimed in independent Claim 1. As described on page 13, lines 6-17 of the present Specification, the location information provided on the identification devices may include the location of the identification devices with respect to particular racks or they may comprise coordinate locations, as two examples. In contrast, Kleinshnitz discloses that the labels provided on the media cartridges 305 merely provide unique identification information for the media cartridges 305 and that the locations of the media cartridges 305 are determined based upon their locations within particular CAMS 202.

In an effort to reject this claimed feature, the Examiner asserts that the discussion contained in column 4, lines 33-44 disclose the claimed means for identifying the locations of the identification devices from the identification information received by the reader device from the plurality of identification devices. *Official Action*, page 4, lines 9-11. That cited section in Kleinshnitz, however, does not disclose what the Examiner alleges, but instead, discusses that the read/write devices are vertically aligned with the movement of the robotic arm mechanism to move the media cartridges between their inventoried positions and the

read/write devices. Thus, the Examiner has clearly misinterpreted the context of the description contained in that cited section of Kleinshnitz.

Accordingly, in addition to failing to disclose that the labels on the media cartridges 305 comprise digital displays, Kleinshnitz also fails to disclose that the locations of the labels are identified from information contained on the labels. The reliance upon the disclosure of Gelbman in an effort to make up for the failure in Kleinshnitz to disclose labels having digital displays thus fails to overcome all of the deficiencies in Kleinshnitz. As such, even assuming for the sake of argument that the combination of Kleinshnitz and Gelbman as proposed by the Examiner (see, *Official Action*, page 4, paragraph 14) were somehow proper, the proposed combination would still fail to disclose each and every feature claimed in independent Claim 1.

The Examiner apparently asserts that it would have been obvious to modify the bar code labels in Kleinshnitz to comprise the electronic labels 16 disclosed in Gelbman. The proposed combination, however, is improper for at least the following reasons.

Gelbman discloses that the electronic label 16 is beneficial because it is remotely updateable. Paragraph [0006]. Thus, the added expense of employing the electronic labels 16 in Gelbman is justified, for instance, when the electronic labels 16 are used to display pricing or other information that is likely to vary. In contrast, the bar code labels used to identify the media cartridges 305 in Kleinshnitz are not likely to be changed once they have been assigned unique identification information. Thus, it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify or replace the bar code labels of the media cartridges 305 with the electronic labels 16 of Gelbman because the added expense would not be justified.

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the combination of Kleinshnitz and Gelbman proposed by the Examiner fails to disclose or fairly suggest the invention as claimed in independent Claim 1. More particularly, the proposed combination of Kleinshnitz and Gelbman fails to disclose the claimed invention and the proposed combination would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. Independent Claim 1 and the claims that depend therefrom are thus allowable over Kleinshnitz and Gelbman considered singularly or in combination with each other.

The claims that depend upon independent Claim 1 are also allowable over Kleinshnitz and Gelbman considered singularly or in combination with each other for reasons in addition to their dependencies upon allowable independent Claim 1. For instance, with regard to depending Claim 40, the Examiner asserts that the disclosure contained in the Abstract and paragraph [0010] of Gelbman discloses that the electronic labels 16 have output modules for wirelessly transmitting identification information. However, those cited sections of Gelbman fail to disclose such information. Instead, those cited sections of Gelbman merely disclose that the electronic labels 16 are configured to receive instructions and to change the display based upon the received instructions. Clearly, therefore, the Examiner has misinterpreted those cited sections of Gelbman.

4. The Rejection of Claims 11 and 12 is Improper

The Examiner correctly asserts that Kleinshnitz and Gelbman fail to disclose the features of Claims 11 and 12. In an effort to make up for the deficiencies in Kleinshnitz and Gelbman, the Examiner relies upon the disclosure contained in Sims. More particularly, with respect to Claim 11, the Examiner asserts that the abstract of Sims discloses labels including

indicia identifying the locations of the labels. *Official Action*, page 8, par. 33. In addition, with respect to Claim 12, the Examiner asserts that the abstract and the disclosure contained in column 1, lines 50-66 of Sims discloses labels comprising location aware devices. *Official Action*, page 8, par. 35.

Initially, the Examiner does not rely upon the disclosure contained in Sims to make up for the deficiencies discussed above with respect to independent Claim 1, upon which Claims 11 and 12 depend. Thus, independent Claim 1 is considered to be allowable over the proposed combination of Kleinshnitz, Gelbman, and Sims and Claims 11 and 12 are also allowable over that proposed combination at least by virtue of their dependencies upon allowable independent Claim 1.

With respect first to Claim 11, the abstract of Sims fails to disclose that labels include indicia identifying the locations of the labels. Instead, the abstract of Sims merely recites that the locations of devices are tracked using a network of communication links and that each device is provided with a tag that identifies the device with respect to other devices. Thus, although Sims may disclose some of the features of Claim 12, there is nothing in the Sims' abstract that could reasonably be construed as disclosing indicia that identifies the locations of the labels.

Thus, even assuming for the sake of argument that the combination of Kleinshnitz, Gelbman, and Sims as proposed by the Examiner were considered to be proper, the proposed combination would still fail to disclose all of the features of independent Claim 1. For instance, the proposed combination would still fail to disclose that a plurality of identification devices comprise respective digital displays configured to display indicia identifying the locations of the identification devices (labels).

5. The Rejection of Claims 41 and 42 is Improper

The Examiner correctly asserts that Kleinshnitz and Gelbman fail to disclose the features of Claims 41 and 42. In an effort to make up for the deficiencies in Kleinshnitz and Gelbman, the Examiner relies upon the disclosure contained in Creager. More particularly, the Examiner asserts that paragraph [0025] of Creager discloses an imaging device 118 for imaging identification information of readable cartridges. *Official Action*, page 9, par. 39.

Initially, the Examiner does not rely upon the disclosure contained in Creager to make up for the deficiencies discussed above with respect to independent Claim 1, upon which Claims 41 and 42 depend. Thus, independent Claim 1 is considered to be allowable over the proposed combination of Kleinshnitz, Gelbman, and Creager and Claims 41 and 42 are also allowable over that proposed combination at least by virtue of their dependencies upon allowable independent Claim 1.

In addition, Creager fails to disclose that locations of the readable cartridges 250 are available from the labels 252 affixed to the cartridges. Instead, Creager discloses that the orientations of the labels 252 are determined from imaging of the labels 252 to determine the orientations of the cartridges 250. *Creager*, par. [0025].

Thus, even assuming for the sake of argument that the combination of Kleinshnitz, Gelbman, and Creager as proposed by the Examiner were considered to be proper, the proposed combination would still fail to disclose all of the features of independent Claim 1. For instance, the proposed combination would still fail to disclose that a plurality of identification devices comprise respective digital displays configured to display indicia identifying the locations of the identification devices (labels).

PATENT

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(8) Conclusion

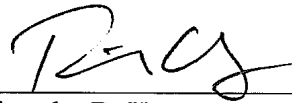
For at least the reasons given above, the rejections of Claims 1-12 and 37-54 are improper. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that such rejections by the Examiner be reversed and these claims be allowed. Attached below for the Board's convenience is an Appendix of Claims 1-12 and 37-54 as currently pending.

Please grant any required extensions of time and charge any fees due in connection with this Appeal Brief to deposit account no. 08-2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: February 23, 2009

By



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(9) Claim Appendix

1. (Previously Presented) A system for managing inventory of components in a room, said system comprising:

a plurality of identification devices affixed to respective associated components, said plurality of identification devices being configured to communicate identification information relating to the respective associated components and comprising respective digital displays configured to display the identification information;

a reader device configured to substantially autonomously receive the identification information from the identification devices;

means for identifying locations of the identification devices from the identification information received by the reader device from the plurality of identification devices; and

a controller configured to communicate with the reader device and compile the identification information received from the reader device and to communicate with the means for identifying the locations of the identification devices to maintain an inventory of the components and their respective locations.

2. (Original) The system according to claim 1, further comprising:

a memory accessible by said controller, wherein said controller is configured to store the identification information and the locations of the identification devices in the memory.

3. (Original) The system according to claim 1, wherein the components comprise electronic devices for use in data centers.

4. (Original) The system according to claim 1, wherein the identification devices comprise labels affixable to the components, said labels having identifying indicia displayed thereon.

5. (Original) The system according to claim 4, wherein the identifying indicia comprises at least one of text, barcode, or a display on a screen.

6. (Original) The system according to claim 1, wherein the identification devices comprise relatively distinctive identifying characteristics, said characteristics comprising at least one of color, composition, and style.

7. (Original) The system according to claim 1, further comprising:
a data transmitting device configured to transmit data to the identification devices;
and
wherein the identification devices comprise electronic apparatuses configured to receive data from the data transmitting device.

8. (Original) The system according to claim 1, wherein the reader device comprises at least one of an imaging device, an infrared reader, and an apparatus configured to wirelessly communicate with the identification devices.

9. (Original) The system according to claim 1, wherein the reader device comprises an information gathering device located on at least one of a wall, ceiling, or floor of the room.

10. (Original) The system according to claim 1, further comprising:
a robotic device having a movable arm and being configured to travel through the room, wherein the reader device is attached to the movable arm of the robotic device.
11. (Original) The system according to claim 1, wherein the means for identifying the locations of the identification devices comprises labels affixed at various positions of the room, said labels including indicia identifying the locations of the labels.
12. (Original) The system according to claim 1, wherein the means for identifying the locations of the identification devices comprises location aware devices configured to determine their locations with respect to other location aware devices and to a fixed reference point.
37. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of identification devices further comprises respective input modules configured to enable receipt of the identification information of the respective associated components.
38. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 37, wherein the input modules comprise infrared ports configured to enable receipt of the identification information from an electronic device through infrared communication.

39. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 37, wherein the input modules enable the identification information to be received into the plurality of identification devices directly from the respective associated components.

40. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of identification devices further comprise respective output modules configured to wirelessly transmit the identification information, wherein the reader device is further configured to receive the wirelessly transmitted identification information.

41. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, wherein the reader device comprises an imaging device positioned on one of a ceiling and a wall of the room, wherein the imaging device is configured to obtain images of the plurality of identification devices, and wherein the means for identifying is further configured to read the identification information from the images of the plurality of the identification devices.

42. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 41, wherein the imaging device is configured to simultaneously obtain images of a plurality of identification devices.

43. (Previously Presented) A system for managing inventory of components in a room, said system comprising:

a plurality of identification devices affixed to respective associated components, said plurality of identification devices being configured to communicate identification information relating to the respective associated components;

an imaging device positioned on one of a ceiling and a wall of the room, wherein the imaging device is configured to obtain images of the plurality of identification devices in a substantially autonomous manner to receive the identification information from the identification devices;

means for identifying locations of the identification devices from reading the identification information contained in the images obtained by the imaging device; and

a controller configured to communicate with the imaging device and compile the identification information received from the reader device and to communicate with the means for identifying the locations of the identification devices to maintain an inventory of the components and their respective locations.

44. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 43, wherein the imaging device is configured to simultaneously obtain images of a plurality of identification devices.

45. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 43, wherein the plurality of identification devices comprise respective digital displays configured to display the identification information.

46. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 43, wherein each of the plurality of identification devices further comprise respective input modules configured to enable receipt of the identification information of the respective associated components.

47. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 46, wherein the input modules comprise infrared ports configured to enable receipt of the identification information from an electronic device through infrared communication.

48. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 46, wherein the input modules enable the identification information to be received into the plurality of identification devices directly from the respective associated components.

49. (Previously Presented) A system for managing inventory of components in a room, said system comprising:

a plurality of identification devices affixed to respective associated components, said plurality of identification devices visually displaying location information pertaining to locations of the respective associated components;

a reader device configured to substantially autonomously receive the location information from the identification devices through imaging of the visually displayed location information;

means for identifying locations of the identification devices from the location information received by the reader device; and

a controller configured to communicate with the reader device and compile the identification information received from the reader device and to communicate with the means for identifying the locations of the identification devices to maintain an inventory of the components and their respective locations.

50. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 49, wherein the plurality of identification devices comprise respective digital displays configured to display the location information.

51. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 49, wherein the reader device comprises at least one of an imaging device, an infrared reader, and an apparatus configured to wirelessly communicate with the identification devices.

52. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 49, wherein each of the plurality of identification devices further comprises respective input modules configured to enable receipt of the identification information of the respective associated components.

53. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 52, wherein the input modules comprise infrared ports configured to enable receipt of the identification information from an electronic device through infrared communication.

54. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 52, wherein the input modules enable the identification information to be received into the plurality of identification devices directly from the respective associated components.

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(10) Evidence Appendix

None.

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(11) Related Proceedings Appendix

None.